

7  
MINUTE  
STARTER

## 7.2 | LQT Writing

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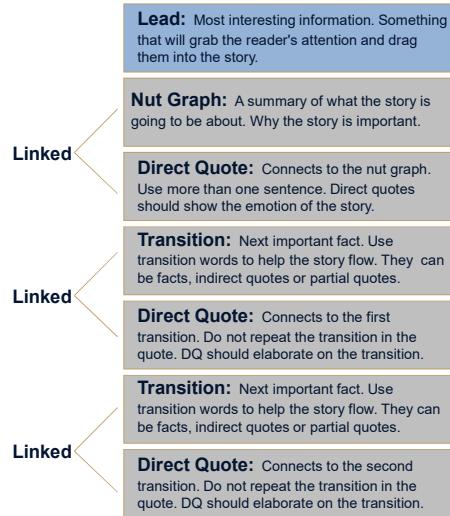
# STEP 1 - LEARN

- Review the Lead-Quote-Transition feature story writing formula on the next slide.
- A strong lead is imperative to good writing, so spend some time reviewing the lead examples in this presentation.

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# TRANSITION QUOTE FORMULA



This formula is also discussed in the Lead-Quote-Transition lesson.

# LEADS

- The opening sentence must grab and hold the reader's attention by using specific, interest-arousing words.
- The lead should leave the reader wondering what happens next.

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# A NARRATIVE LEAD TELLS A STORY

- Example

- Unwilling to accept the news he had just received from the doctors, he lowered his head in defeat. His mother sat speechless in the corner, one tear rolling down her face as she saw her son's chance to claim a state wrestling medal disappear because his heart just wouldn't allow it.

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## A DESCRIPTIVE LEAD DESCRIBES A PERSON / EVENT

- Example

- Deion Sanders Jr. knows what they say in the hallways.

They say he'll be a terrible quarterback. That he's too short. That he can't see squat past the six-feet-something offensive linemen. That he's cocky. That he'll never amount to anything.

They say he'll never be his dad.

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## A DIRECT QUOTE LEAD – USE SPARINGLY

- Example

- “Coach Hawkins!”

Brad Hawkins, the longtime Westlake athletic trainer, recognized Coach Steven Ramsey's voice over the noise of the spectators behind him. But he had never heard Ramsey's voice like that.

Hawkins ran to Ramsey, who was crouched over varsity player Matt Nader pleading with the athlete.

“Hang in there.”

“Don't leave us.”

“Everything's going to be all right.”



## A STARTLING STATEMENT LEAD CREATES DRAMA

- She never knew she had it.
- Junior Josh Duckworth has a fetish.

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# AVOID STARTING WITH GENERALIZATIONS

- Rather than this:
  - With America engaged in a war in Iraq, many students know U.S. military men who have lost their lives.
  - Leaguetown lost one of its own last month when Nicolas Barrera was killed in Iraq.
- Try This:
  - When Briana Barrera didn't hear from her son, Nicolas, for a week she knew something was wrong. Maybe it was mother's intuition, but she knew.

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## AVOID NEWS OR EDITORIAL LEADS

- Rather than this:
  - Congratulations to Sarah Clark for making the cheerleading squad. We are proud of her.
- Try This:
  - Sarah Clark knows what they think. The smirks. The laughs. The way the other girls, all week long in cheerleading practice, have been rolling their eyes.
  - They think she's a joke.



# AVOID STATING THE OBVIOUS

- Rather than this:
  - Every day, millions of people wake up, go to work or go to school. But some days, they don't.
- Try this:
  - Melissa hates school.

It's not that she's dumb. It isn't that she doesn't fit in socially. In fact, it isn't that anything is particularly wrong.

It's more of a matter of nothing being particularly right.



## AVOID CLICHES

- Rather than this:
  - And the winner is . . .
- Try this:
  - After tension-filled hours of last-minute primping, the time had come for the contestants to walk into the arena and strut their stuff in front of the three judges and an appreciative crowd.

Some walked briskly with an air of confidence. Others, distracted by the lights and cameras, shuffled along slowly. A few, overcome by the pressure, foamed at the mouth and mooed.



## QUOTES AND TRANSITIONS

- It is impossible to get good quotes and interesting facts while sitting in this room.
- Good reporting requires talking to people, taking notes, and recording the conversation on your phone whenever possible.



## STEP 2 - PRACTICE

- Read the sample story on *Start Right Handout 7.2* and, with teacher guidance, evaluate the story using *Start Right Handout 7.2 – Feature Story Rubric*.



## STEP 3 - USE

- Using your interviews from Start Right Lesson 7.1, begin writing feature copy for a spread in the yearbook.
- Use *Start Right Handout 7.2 – On Deadline Copy Writing* to begin organizing and drafting your work.

